



**Harness Breeders
Victoria Inc**

PO Box 406
EPSOM VIC 3551
AUSTRALIA

vicharnessbreeders.org.au
contact@vicharnessbreeders.org.au
p 0417 016 820

tw @HarnessBreeders
in @HarnessBreedersVic
pi /HarnessBreeders

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Harness Breeders (Vic) Inc ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday, 28th October 2018 commencing at 11:45am at
Shepparton Harness Racing Club.

MINUTES

1. Welcome

President, Terry Lewis welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

2. Call for Apologies

Apologies received from Nick Hooper.

Moved by Tony Britt, seconded John Campbell that the apologies be accepted.

3. Minutes of the previous AGM held on 29th October 2017

Moved Shannon Nixon, seconded Graeme Rayner that the minutes of the previous AGM be accepted and endorsed. **Carried**

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

Nil

5. Correspondence Received & Business Arising

Nil

6. President's Report – Terry Lewis

As attached – Appendix 1

Moved John Campbell, seconded Shannon Nixon that the President's report be accepted. **Carried**

7. Secretary's Report – Brett Coffey

As attached – Appendix 2

Moved Ashley Haynes, seconded Tony Britt that the Secretary's report be accepted. **Carried**

8. Treasurer's Report – Paul Dobson

a. Annual Financial Reports

As attached - Appendix 3.

Moved Shannon Nixon, seconded Brett Coffey that the treasurer's report be accepted. **Carried**

b. Motion for next year's membership fees & charges

That the 2019-20 membership fees for Harness Breeders (Vic) be \$55 (incl GST) for Full Membership and \$11 (incl GST) for Associate Membership.

That Trackbred subscription is not included in this membership.

That the subscription fee for Trackbred be established and advertised prior to 1st September 2019.

Moved Terry Lewis, seconded Shannon Nixon. **Carried**

9. Other Report

a. Executive Officer - Desiree Pettit

As attached - Appendix 4. Moved Brett Coffey, Seconded Elizabeth MacLean that the Executive Officer's report be accepted. **Carried.**

10. Election of Committee Members for 2017/18

Terry Lewis acknowledged the outgoing committee members for their tireless work. There were three vacancies due to the retirements of Jonathan McNeil, Adam Wilkinson and Tony Britt.

Two new nominations were received from Mark Hughes and Steve Dickson.

There is one casual vacancy.

11. General Business

None.

12. HRV CEO David Martin address

David Martin addressed many items including:

- The HRV and HBV relationship was strengthened during the past 12 months.
- The industry has started to turnaround
- Trots Vision has been created.
- HRV returned a profit this past financial year.
- HRV still have \$27m debt.
- The number of foals and participants continues to decrease.
- If labor are re-elected at the upcoming state election then they have promised an extra \$3m a year for two years.
- HRV are talking with the other parties to seek the same of better deal for certainty going forward.
- Point Of Consumption tax provides new challenges.
- Inter Dominion: Look for the advertising to ramp up late November.

13. Closure of Meeting by President

Meeting closed 12:36 pm

Appendix 1 President Report

Thank you for the opportunity to present my 2017/18 Harness Breeders Victoria (HBV) President's report. The last year has continued to see cost pressures escalate for breeders both in Victoria and nationally. A survey of breeders conducted by Harness Breeders Victoria across breeders in Victoria in 2017 overwhelmingly identified that the single greatest factor in breeders reducing the number of mares they breed or even relinquishing their breeding interests is because of the escalating costs involved with breeding. It is projected that the number of foals that will be branded from the 2018/19 Victorian foal drop will fall below 1300 foals which represents nearly a 20% decrease in foal numbers born in Victoria in the last 5 years. This decrease is of grave concern and proposes a major impediment in ensuring an adequate racing population to sustain field sizes and race meetings into the future.

Harness Breeders Victoria are continually highlighting to Harness Racing Victoria (HRV) this decline in foal numbers, the urgency to arrest this trend, and the consequences this proposes for the future.

In March this year HBV presented a list of potential initiatives to stimulate breeding and/or reduce some of the cost pressures on Victorian breeders. Some of these initiatives included removal of foal registration fees for Vicbred horses, conversion of Vicbred Platinum to a Victorian Sires Stakes race series, additional Vicbred only races and an increase in the Vicbred first win bonus to \$10,000.

HBV welcomed the announcement made by HRV in May that foal notification fees for 2018/19 foals would be abolished for foals bred from a Victorian based mare and stallion, and reduced for foals bred from an interstate or overseas stallion. However, far more needs to be done. We are currently discussing with HRV the potential to convert the Vicbred Platinum (and the associated Vicbred home grown and Vicbred mares race series) to a Victorian Sires Stakes race series as well as the opportunity service certificate bonuses may offer in stimulating breeding in Victoria.

HBV have worked hard to enhance our relationship and partnership with HRV.

Bi monthly, the HBV Executive Officer and President meet with the HRV CEO and senior HRV staff to discuss a range of issues including potential breeding initiatives identified above, media and promotion opportunities, policy changes, as well as resolution of any emerging issues. This has been very positive and the relationship and trust between HBV and HRV has grown significantly. HBV is regularly consulted on a range of issues now and I anticipate more benefits and initiatives for breeders will emerge from this enhanced relationship in the future. The CEO of Harness Racing Victoria, David Martin regularly attends and addresses HBV meetings.

During 2017/18, HBV coordinated and presented submissions to HRV on improved racing opportunities for metropolitan trotting mares, proposed changes to the Australian Premier Trotting Sale (APTS) format as well as initiatives to stimulate breeding in Victoria.

This year, HBV thanks to the dedication and hard work of our Executive Officer Desiree Pettit Keating initiated two new projects – the Follow a Foal Project and the joint Thoroughbred and Harness Breeders Stud Tour. Both projects are aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of breeding and hopefully enticing new breeders to become involved. Thanks very much to our partners Alabar, Aldebaran Park and Swettenham stud for their involvement and support of these projects.

HBV continues to partner with the Maryborough Harness Racing Clubs in sponsoring the Humbletonian Day. The Humbletonian day is now firmly entrenched in the racing calendar and attracts a lot of interest and support and the bonus paid to the breeders of winning horses is favourably received. HBV similarly sponsored races on Boort Cup day with cash bonuses paid to a number of breeders who bred horses that won on the day. We welcome any sponsorship proposals that promote breeders and breeding in general.

The Trackbred magazine continues to be the flagship publication for our organisation. Trackbred provides a wealth of stories and information to keep members and subscribers informed and entertained on an extensive range of breeding matters. Trackbred will continue to be the medium to provide information to members, however with significant increases in printing, postage and other associated costs Trackbred is a growing drain on HBV's financial resources. In coming months we will be reviewing our approach in producing and distributing this magazine. Thank you to Peter Wharton for the magnificent role he performs in editing the Trackbred magazine, a truly professional publication.

Thank you also to Peter for the role he undertakes in coordinating the Stallion Guide. Peter has undertaken the role for many years and works tirelessly with our advertisers and our partners at Metro Printing to ensure the stallion guide is published in a timely manner. The guide continues to be the "breeder's bible" for breeders right across Australia and New Zealand.

Thank you to our Executive Officer Desiree Pettit Keating. Desiree continues to ensure the profile and activities of HBV are promoted and communicated via the range of electronic and social media avenues as well as dealing with the day to day administrative and organisational demands of the Association. Thank you Desiree, your professionalism and dedication certainly make my role as President and the operation of the HBV Committee very straight forward.

It would be remiss of me if I did not acknowledge as part of this President's report the contribution made to HBV by retiring committee member Tony Britt. Tony has made an enormous contribution to Harness Breeders Victoria and to harness racing generally. He was President of HBV for 5 years from 2009/10 to 2013/14 and has been a committee member for over 15 years. Tony has been a very active committee member contributing to the development over time of numerous papers and submissions. Tony provides considered and respected input to matters discussed at committee meetings and his wise counsel will be sorely missed. Thank you also to the other retiring committee members – Adam Wilkinson and Jonathon McNeil for their contribution.

I look forward to new committee members joining the committee and continuing the work of HBV in advocating for breeders, promoting breeding and developing initiatives to stimulate and enhance breeding into the future.

Thank you to all HBV Committee members, especially Vice President - Shannon Nixon, Secretary Brett Coffey and Treasurer Paul Dobson. You have all contributed greatly to the wonderful sport of harness racing.

Terry Lewis
President
Harness Breeders (Vic)

Appendix 2 Secretary Report

I would like to thank both Desiree and the committee for all the work put in.

With the resignation of Shannon Nixon as president last year Terry Lewis stood up and took that role.

He has handled it exceptionally well, working with both HRV and the Advisory Council to put HBV's views to do with breeding matters.

It was very pleasing to see HRV work with the state government to reduce foaling notification fees for the 2018/19 season.

It has been frustrating though that these reductions have not been officially locked in for the coming seasons.

Finally I would very much like to thank each and every member for their contribution to, and their support of HBV.

Thanks, Brett Coffey.

Appendix 3 Treasurer Report

HBV has recorded a trading loss for the year ended 30 June 2018 of \$14380.00.

The year could be best described as a year of consolidation.

Costs have been very well managed with minimal spends given there was a significant decrease in revenue.

Key financial points:

- Revenue is down significantly in relation to advertising and reflects the state of the economy and the industry
- Provision for Bad debts net of gst included at \$19,725 (the amount listed on the balance sheet of \$21,698 includes gst) from 2017 proved correct as bad debts of just over \$22,000 were written off, with some debtors going into liquidation and other proving uncollectable. Bad debt write off decisions have been made following a complete review of past financials, debtors ledgers and billings following an exhaustive collection program undertaken to collect all outstanding monies owed. It is not a decision that has been made lightly.
- All debtors as at 30 June 2018 after the above are considered collectable
- Steps were undertaken to address past practices in relation to invoicing and payments of accounts with larger deposits required for advertising and no further advertising credit where accounts were outstanding.
- The overall net members funds position has decreased by increased \$14,380 during the year, in part being \$12,489 less cash available

The financial result indicates a severe tightness in the breeding industry and a shrinkage of numbers of advertisers.

Discussions have and will take place and steps undertaken by the committee in order to try and make some inroads into turning a profit in 2018/19.

I'd like to thank Melissa Parsons, bookkeeper, for her assistance throughout the year, as well as Desiree and the rest of the committee for their dedication to HBV and ongoing support.

Should anyone have any questions feel free to contact me on 0409355942.

Thank you.

PAUL DOBSON
TREASURER

Appendix 4 Executive Officer Report

In 2017-18, the several previous seasons' efforts in consolidating systems, building relationships and stabilising finances have enabled the committee to focus on developing plans and activities to benefit both members and the Victorian breeding industry generally. Ongoing discussions with Harness Racing Victoria have also delivered positive results in the current season, and will continue to do so as more plans and policies are rolled out.

Some other 2017-18 highlights include:

- Structured and active lobbying of Harness Racing Victoria and the Advisory Council around a number of relevant issues, including Vicbred, trotting mare race programming and breeder fees
- First research project undertaken on members and breeders more generally to help shape policy and lobbying, as well as delivery of membership value
- Positive relationship developed with Thoroughbred Breeders Victoria in the development of a jointly hosted tour of Central Victorian studs (delivered in the 2018-19FY)
- Significant partnerships established with charities, the Children's Tumour Foundation and the Women's Cancer Foundation, in the completion of extensive planning for the Follow A Foal project (launched in the 2018-19FY)
- The 22nd edition of the *Australasian Standardbred Stallion Guide* with a readership of over 6,000 and continuing success of changes made invoicing policy which continues to help clear aged debts
- Another highly successful Stallion Guide Cover Competition, with continued strong engagement on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter – this continues to be a successful way of building our follower base on all three platforms, giving greater exposure for our activities and sponsors
- Well-attended member, breeder and vendor BBQ on the Friday prior to the Australian Pacing Gold Melbourne yearling sale in February and positive youth engagement through a colouring competition and display
- Stable membership with positive signs for the 2018-19 season

The hard work put in by the committee in both lobbying and the establishment of projects for the coming financial year will no doubt deliver benefits to be enjoyed in seasons to come.

The warmest of wishes to all member breeders for healthy foals on the ground in 18-19 and successful coverings for the next season.

Desiree Pettit-Keating